

DULUTH AMERICAN INDIAN COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, February 25, 2008 - 5:00 p.m.
Room 402 City Hall

Members Present: Michele Gordon, Dr. Robert Powless, Donna Ennis, John Day, Ricky DeFoe, Warner Wirta, Joy Dorscher, Tony LaDeaux

Excused Absent: Beatrice Kitto

Absent: Mike Sayers

Staff present: Char McLennan, Katie Nickolay, Dave Holbeck

Others present: See sign-in sheets

CALL TO ORDER, APPROVAL OF AGENDA AND INTRODUCTIONS:

Motion by Warner Warner, seconded by Dr. Powless to approve the agenda.

Motion was approved unanimously.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 28, 2008 MEETING:

It was noted that there was one abstention regarding approval of terms from the January meeting, rather than unanimous approval as stated in the minutes.

Motion by Dr. Powless, seconded by Donna Ennis to approve the minutes of the January 28, 2008 meeting, with the noted correction. The motion was approved unanimously.

COMMUNITY PUBLIC FORUM / OPEN PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD:

No comments from the public.

OLD BUSINESS:

Commission Liaison with the Children's Justice Initiative (CJI) – The next meeting is being scheduled during the first or second week of March. The Initiative is studying the barriers that youth face in St. Louis County (SLC). LaDeaux cited instances where blatant discrimination thrives in the schools in Duluth. He was asked if Judge Floerke is part of the Initiative. He said he is, but it was unknown how much he is actually doing with this project. Carol DeVerney is part of CJI. DeFoe suggested asking Judge Floerke to speak at a DAIC meeting. He talked about pushing for advocacy for children. The Committee discussed having Judge Floerke as a speaker at the April DAIC meeting because this discussion would do well with the ICWA topics on the agenda for March.

Update on Education and Racism Summit Meeting of December 18, 2007 – The summit will take place in October. There are a lot of people involved and they are talking about the curriculum in the schools when the topic should really be about the

racial climate/atmosphere the kids face at the schools. The date of the summit will be announced at a later date. Dr. Powless suggested the Commission include information about the DAIC and what they do to be available at the summit.

Lake Superior Barrels Disposal, Report from DAIC sub-committee – It was reported that the Subcommittee held a meeting on February 15th to discuss the barrels in Lake Superior. The City Council, according to Ron Boshey, will be having a seminar with Red Cliff about the barrels in April. Mostly, the seminar will go on with the necessary people notified. The three basic things that came out: Representative Mike Jaros is a strong ally, Red Cliff will be appearing before City Council next month, there is a bill going to the legislature which is a 3/8 of 1% increase until 2034, to go towards environmental issues: 33% towards water, 5% of that towards drinking water. Funds available would only be supplemental and would require matching funds. DeFoe said the newspaper said it was not a super-fund site but he found other sources that said it is a super-fund site to that remains uncertain. Red Cliff is concerned about the condition of the barrels, how they will be brought up, and if they are too deteriorated, matters will be worse. Dr. Powless said he talked to Mayor Ness and found him to be interested in this issue. The Committee recommended the subcommittee sit in on a future meeting with Ness and Red Cliff. It was agreed that a meeting with the Mayor should occur, but that it should be a separate meeting, just to discuss this topic—other than the meeting of the DAIC with Mayor Ness, scheduled for March 6th at 10:00 am. The DAIC Chairs agreed to request a second meeting with Mayor Ness to discuss the barrels when they meet with him on March 6th. It was noted that topics to be discussed with the Mayor (on March 6th) should include Independent Civilian Review Board and other general things the Commission is working on.

A man in the public said he could help get the backing of city council members while talking to the mayor, if the subcommittee and Commission would be interested. Gordon said the meeting maybe should go in stages, but it is up to the subcommittee how they want to do things. Powless said when meeting with the mayor, it might be easier to have fewer people meeting with him at a time. Greg Price brought some papers from the Duluth public library that said the site was super-funded. Brad Clifford brought up on the Z-13 (handout) to note that the super fund site is managed by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Powless suggested on the super-fund issue (because of the question on the documents) to find someone in the cities or Washington D.C. to call them up and ask if it is a super-fund site or not. It is part of the super-fund list but not on the national priorities list. Gordon said Red Cliff is finding out if they are a super-fund site. Clifford brought up that how we frame our interest in the issue with Red Cliff is paramount. Gordon said the subcommittee will meet and decide what direction to go. This will be talked about more at future meetings.

Discussion of DAIC Meeting Applications to Fill Expired and Expiring Terms on the Commission – This issue is tabled and moved to the end of the night because it is something that cannot be done in session. There are two positions that need to be filled,

Brian Wilson and Mike Sayers. Also, John Day's term expires in May and his final meeting is tonight.

NEW BUSINESS:

Review and discussion of Duluth and St. Louis County 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness – Char McLennan, Donna Ennis, Laura DeRosier from SLC

McLennan passed out handouts of the St. Louis County 10-Year Plan to End Homelessness. She explained the strategies of the 10-year plan, which started with Bergson in 2004. The plan has good initiatives to address homelessness. One big issue is providing ongoing supports for people who may experience a crisis to maintain their housing rather than become homeless. Also, barriers to getting and maintaining housing are addressed. The Housing First and Permanent Supportive housing is emphasized in order to decrease the numbers of people who are homeless. There are seven subcommittees that focus on different issues. DeRosier said the basic premise of the plan is to make it a community process. Cultural competency and vital community pieces should be provided for by letting people from all different perspectives have a voice. Keith Hamre is chair of the subcommittee for Rapid Re-Housing. The first thing is that the committee changed the timeline. A Housing First philosophy is being developed by getting people into permanent housing as soon as possible and then dealing with barriers they face. The next step for the committee is to establish more permanent housing in Duluth. Powless said he thinks finding jobs should also be a focus for people facing foreclosure so they can stay in their houses. DeFoe said Fond du Lac offers some assistance for band members to obtain housing. LaDeaux talked about the fear that is created when people are trying to get housing (subsidies) because they do not want to lose what they already have, like food stamps. DeFoe talked about the sliding scale and the mortgage rates and how it is really hard for people, but at Fond du Lac there is more of a safety net for people there. McLennan talked about the other handout from the 2006 Wilder Study. Dave Holman, CD intern, is making sense of the data and analyzing data for Duluth specifically.

Review of Application of Support to the Minnesota Housing Finance Agency Single-Family Housing Program – NCLT

McLennan passed around the applications. Jim Mischler-Philbin could not be here tonight because he had to attend a funeral. McLennan read the letter of support to the Commission. The land has gone to American Indian people in the Land Trust.

Motion by Dr. Powless, seconded by Ricky DeFoe, to send this letter of support. The motion passed unanimously.

Gordon asked who would do the letter. Dorscher asked if Mischler-Philbin could draft the letter for the Commission. McLennan will ask John Judd for him to draft it and John will prepare it for the signatures of the Commission officers.

ANNOUNCEMENTS, UPCOMING EVENTS AND COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS:

Powless: Florida was very nice. He read a story about Paul Buffalo from the book he is working on.

Wirta: He said his hearing is going down so he said he may be starting proceedings about resigning from the Commission. Powless suggested Wirta call Tamminen about a hearing aid that is supposed to work very well. He also mentioned a cochlear implant. Donna Ennis said there are also adapters that can be put on the telephone. Wirta said he will think about all of this.

DeFoe: Was looking at the Minnesota Sea-Grant program website and said it was \$20 per person to go out on a boat to learn about many different issues about the lake. He plans to take his granddaughters out on this tour to get the next generation thinking about the Lake. He said there will be a ceremony at the White House for a Master Sergeant, Yellowbird (English name Woodrow Wilson Keeble) March 3rd at 2:30, who served in WWII and the Korean conflict. Warner added that 43% of people who fought in the worst areas were Native. DeFoe said there is to be a gathering of all Anishinaabe to bring people and spirit together to talk about some issues, so look for around flyers. It may be held at the YWCA.

McLennan: She went to Florida on her honeymoon and said it was very nice.

LaDeaux: Thursday March 13, 5-7 at the Peace United Church, Tad Johnson and Carol Driscoll will be there along with others. LaDeaux talked about the Indian kids who were wrongly accused and that only two of them ended up not graduating. DeFoe added that on Native Report there was a discussion of what happened in Mille Lacs.

Day: He participated in training on the communications between the tribes and state legislators. One topic was about sovereignty. He put them in a spot where they could ask him questions freely about Native people and topics. He said that this is his last meeting. He will be gone in May and will be at a conference in April. As the Commission proceeds, he says things will go on and continue to go well.

Ennis: Is currently reading Crazy Horse, the Strange Man of the Ogalalas from 1942. She says it is good to remind oneself of the atrocities and the trust that Native people had in the government and how the government hooked people with commodities and broke many promises and treaties with Native people.

Dorscher: She said how much she appreciates what the subcommittee is doing and hopes that Warner is not going to leave the Commission and thanked him for being here. She thanked DeFoe for identifying things that the Commission sometimes may gloss over. She also thanked LaDeaux for being here and contributing a lot to the

Commission. She will miss Day's input and hard work that he has put into the Commission. She thanked Ennis for remembering so much information. She thanked Gordon for keeping the meetings on task. She thanked Dr. Powless for his **encouragement** in participating in the Commission. She said the talent that sits around the table is amazing.

Gordon: She said she will miss Day coming to meetings. Last Friday she went to the Merritt school and talked to the kids. The kids sat in a circle and asked questions about culture. She feels the kids are the future and that they should be paid attention to. She encouraged Wirta to not give up on staying in the Commission.

NEXT MEETING/DATE/LOCATION:

March 17th, 2008 in Room 402 City Hall.

ADJOURNMENT:

Motion by Donna Ennis, seconded by Dr. Powless, to adjourn the meeting. The motion was unanimously approved and the meeting was adjourned.